

Washington Merry-Go-Round

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Drive on Fulbright Boomerangs

By Drew Pearson

Most red-faced solons on Capitol Hill right now are Rep. Dale Alford of Little Rock, Ark., Sen. Strom Thurmond, the South Carolina Dixiecrat, and Sen. John Tower, the new Republican from Texas. Their faces are about as red as the streak of color they planned to paint across the name of William Fulbright, the scholarly ex-university president who represents Arkansas in the Senate.



Pearson

Fulbright had written a memo to Secretary of Defense McNamara alerting him that certain Pentagon brass hats were lining up with industrial right-wingers to foment a sort of neo-fascism despite the fact they were wearing Uncle Sam's uniform.

This brought a storm of reaction from the Dixiecrats.

Fulbright was the only member of the Senate to vote against appropriations for Sen. Joe McCarthy's witch-hunting expedition during the heyday of McCarthy's popularity. And Senator Thurmond immediately charged that censorship of speeches by military men is a direct result of communist efforts by "others who are working for the same goals." On top of this, Congressman Alford, who wants to run against Fulbright next year, saw a chance to smear him.

So, since the Dixiecrats couldn't investigate Fulbright under Senate rules, they

hatched up a demand to investigate Pentagon muzzling of the military men—especially Maj. Gen. Edwin A. Walker, reprimanded for attacking former President Harry Truman and trying to brainwash his troops in the political gibberish of the John Birch Society.

Hoopla for Walker

The campaign for General Walker was launched with great hoopla. Congressman Alford was appointed chairman of a "Congressional Committee for Justice for General Walker." He went on the air, told his radio audience that General Walker was a "great military leader," a "decorated hero" whom left-wingers were seeking to destroy and whose "only crime is patriotism."

Other members of the "Congressional Committee for Justice for General Walker" included Edgar Hiestand of California, chief Congressional member of the John Birch Society, Senator Thurmond and Senator Tower of Texas. Some of them called on Secretary of the Army Elvis Stahr.

They got nowhere with Stahr, a former president of the University of West Virginia. He made it clear that no amount of pressure would cause him to backtrack on his reprimand of Walker. He said he had no fear of a Congressional investigation. His Congressional callers departed looking glum.

Meanwhile, Senator Tower had introduced a resolution to investigate Walker's reprimand, and Senator Thurmond got a preliminary hearing before the Senate Armed Ser-

vices Committee on the resolution.

Faces Get Red

This was when Congressional faces began to blush crimson.

At the Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, Sen. Margaret Chase Smith of Maine, No. 1 lady of the Senate, asked a quiet question of Secretary McNamara.

"Was General Walker commander of the Federal troops in Little Rock?" she asked.

McNamara answered in the affirmative.

Chairman Dick Russell of Georgia, the usually imperious chairman of the Armed Services Committee, then exploded. "General Walker was in command at Little Rock. I thought at the time that he exercised high-handed, arbitrary and intimidating methods.

"If the Secretary will look back further he will find that I wired both President Eisenhower and Secretary Wilson, pointing out that for the first time in peacetime in this country troops were being commanded by a man who used a loudspeaker to intimidate the public."

Russell added that Walker ordered his troops to drive people off private property with "bayonets and rifle butts," also that eight persons in Little Rock were "put in jail and held incommunicado for hours."

"If that is the situation," concluded Senator Russell, "the tendencies of General Walker should have been very well known in the Department of Defense. It had been put on notice a long time before."

It was Walker's operation at Little Rock that elected Alford to Congress. As a member of

the school board he campaigned against integration, against Federal troops, against what they did under Walker at Little Rock. As a result he defeated one of the most respected members of Congress, Rep. Brooks Hays.

Now that Alford is safely in Congress, the wheel of fate has spun round again, and he suddenly finds himself the bosom buddy and defender of the man who used drawn bayonets in enforcing integration at Little Rock.

Behind the Scenes

Texas Republicans will deny it, but they're calling a meeting in Wichita Falls, Sept. 26, to pick a strong Republican candidate to replace Congressman Frank Ikard, Democrat, who is resigning in January. They hope to follow the example of Sen. John Tower of Texas, the first Republican Senator elected in a hundred years from the Lone Star State, by electing another Republican Congressman from Texas . . . George Dixon, the newspaperman who keeps Washington in good humor, is publishing a rip-roaring book next week, "Leaning on a Column." . . . President Kennedy is so sore at Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia for being pro-Soviet at the Belgrade Conference that he has canceled tentative plans for Tito to visit the United States . . . The Musicians Union is working with the Immigration Service to keep Greek and Egyptian belly dancers and bazooka players out of the United States. Two New York night clubs, the Suez and the Port Said, want to import Near East dancers, but the Immigration Service, backed by the Musicians Union, says no.

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